Impact of Hajj on Muslims with special reference to Pakistan

• ***Dr. Nasreen Tahir Malik***

•• ***Mohammad Tahir Malik***

Abstract:

Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam and is obligatory, once in life time, on adult Muslims having physical and financial capacity. Historically, 'Hajj' has been a rigorous undertaking. Although technological advancement has made it easier in many ways, yet there are hardships owing to ever increasing number of pilgrims visiting Makkah Mukkaramah i.e. a city with finite resources including all available resources. The Government of Pakistan, being a facilitator, endeavors to make the Hajj experience as comfortable as is possible within the resources available and standards affordable by Pakistani Hujjaj by making extensive arrangements, through a transparent process, so that the pilgrims could perform their manasik-e-Hajj as enshrined in Quran and Sunnah. The Pilgrim accounts stress that the Hajj leads to a feeling of unity with fellow Muslims. It increases belief in equality and harmony among ethnic groups and Islamic sects and leads to more favorable attitudes toward all the people of Pakistan including women with greater acceptance of female education and employment. Hajjis show increased belief in peace, and in equality and harmony among adherents of different religions. The evidence suggests that these changes are more a result of exposure to and interaction with Hajjis from around the world, rather than religious instruction or a changed social role of pilgrims upon their return to Pakistan.[1]

The word ***"**Hajj" means "to set out for a place"* and our utmost special 'Ibadah' in Islam and we as Pakistani feel elevation to perform it. It contains an element of other important 'Ibadah' in Islam, like Jihad and fasting. In Jihad, one is contributing with one's physical capabilities and money to fight

• *Assistant Professor, Arabic, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad.*

•• *Research Scholar, Management Sciences, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad*

against evil in the way of Allah. It involves a travel away from home and sacrifice of one's wealth and even life. In Hajj too, one travels away from family to meet Allah and exhibit one's determination to surrender before Allah.[2]

From the social point of view, thousands of people go to perform Hajj from all over the the country (Pakistan) as well as world having different races, color, belonging to different countries and speaking different languages as Pakistan has more than 42 regional language whereas world has in thousands of different languages in the Muslim communities . They all come to perform Hajj and follow the procedurals activities of Hajj in the same manner to exhibit that there is no difference in Islam between human beings on the basis of wealth, race, creed, language and region. All the people, despite their diverse demographic attributes, wear the same unstitched clothes, come together at one place, and follow the same rituals and exhibit unity and discipline. From the cultural viewpoint, Hajj brings the people together and *Gemeincshaft and Gesellschaft* cultures together. It brings increased understanding about different cultures and unites people by ensuring mutual respect and harmony. It expands people's vision and makes them accommodate and leave their biases first at the Holy Places and then this mutual harmony is perpetuated after one experiences life away from worldly affairs, wearing unstitched clothes, using no means of adornment and beautification and embracing one's true identity as submission of one's will under the will of Allah.



Figure 1. Site of the Mina for Performing Hajj. (Image Credited by SPA)

The Religious Significance of the Hajj

The Hajj takes place each year during the month of Dhu al-Hijja, the last month of the Muslim calendar. It is virtually impossible to describe the deep emotions generated during the Hajj, even by watching it on Saudi television which annually records it. Each ritual practice has a special significance. The principal rites are Ihram, Tawaf, Sa`ey, Wuquf, Arafah, Rajm, and the `Id al-Adha.[3]

Ihram is a declaration of intent to perform the Hajj, performed before entering Makkah. Afterwards, pilgrim has done special Irham white cloth representing the equality of all believers before God, regardless of race, gender, age or social standing. Men wear two coverings for the upper and lower body, and women wear white robes.

Tawaf, performed on arrival in the great Haram Mosque in Makkah, is completed by circling seven times around the Ka`bah, located in a great open area in the Haram Mosque. The Ka`bah is considered the spiritual and geographical center of Islam, toward which Muslims direct their faces in prayer. The Ka`bah, is a house of Allah that was originally built by the Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) and his son Ismail (Ishmael) as a place of worship of the one true Allah and it symbolizes monotheism which is at the heart of Islam. Each year just before the Hajj, the Ka`bah is covered with a new black velvet and gold drape called the Kiswah. Following the Arrival Tawaf, pilgrims say prayers at the Maqam Ibraham, a station near the Ka`bah, and also drink water from the holy well of Zamzam

Sa`y consists of seven laps on foot between two elevations formerly adjacent to the mosque but now a part of the mosque complex.

Wuquf is performed in a ceremony of "Standing" on the Plain of Arafat, about 20 kilometers east of Makkah beginning at noon on the ninth day of Dhu al-Hijjah, called Yawm al-Wuquf, "Standing Day." The favored spot to stand is Jabal al-Rahma, the Mount of Mercy, a rocky hill rising about 150 feet above the plain and crowned by a tall white stone obelisk. According to Islamic tradition, the Wuquf is the Hajj – the supreme hours. Everyone must literally be present at `Arafat at maghrib (sunset) or the Hajj is forfeited.

Nafrah, the word literally means "the Rush" in Arabic. As the sun finally disappears over the horizon, Hajjis surge forth from `Arafat to Mina, some 17 kilometers away. They travel by bus, car, truck, and for many as an act of piety, by foot. The first stop is Muzdalifa about seven kilometers west, where Sunset and Evening prayers (Salat al-Maghrib and al-`Isha) are traditionally said, and a special prayer can be said at a roofless mosque called al-Mash`ar al-Haram (the Sacred Grove). After midnight and saying Early Morning prayer (Salat al-Fajr), the Hajjis travel on to Mina, a small town about ten kilometers farther west, where they will stay for three days.

Rajm, in Mina, Hajjis perform Rajm over the next three days, the ritual throwing of seven stones at three pillars, called Jamras which represent

Shayateen (devils). The tenth through the twelfth of Dhu al-Hijja is also the `Id al-Adha (the Feast of the Sacrifice) which includes the sacramental sacrifice of a blemishless animal, usually a sheep. The `Id is celebrated not only at the Hajj but also throughout the Muslim world where it is a joyous time to visit family and friends. On the thirteenth, Hajjis return to Makkah for a Farewell Tawaf and are free from all Ihram restrictions. At that point, the Hajj is technically over, and Hajjis are free to travel home or on to visit al-Madinah. There the pace is more relaxed and people can take more time to see the sights, principally the Prophet's Mosque.[4]

The Impact of the Hajj on Pak Public Administration:

Due to tremendous advances in transportation and communication technology, the Hajj has changed Pakistan public administration at national level since1975 than previous history of Pakistan. However, KSA has also changed its administrations since 1927, an estimated 300 to 350 thousand attended with only about 150,000 from outside the Kingdom. In 1972, there was a total of 1,042,007 Hajjis, including 353,460 Saudis, 209,208 non-Saudi residents, and 479,339 from abroad. Whereas, today, more than 2.5 million performed the Hajj during Hajj period 2014. The increase in the numbers of pilgrims has greatly increased the complexity of Hajj administration in KSA[5]

Providing Zamzam water for so many Hajjis is a major task. Traditionally, the Zamzam is roamed the Haram Mosque providing water to all who asked as Pakistani management to do coordinate with Saudi government to provide the same to Pakistani Hujjaj. To meet these administrative needs, the Pakistani government has established a combination of public services and government regulated privately administered Hajj services as well.[6]

The Hajj impact on the Pak Services of Private Tour Operator:

The Hajj impacted a lot on the Pakistani Private Tour Operators to facilitate Hujjaj of the countries as number of our Pilgrims are increasing year by year and government is also providing subsidies to Hujjaj for basic amenities at KSA besides service of Saudi companies as these are regulated in private sector enterprises. Inland bus services are provided by a combination of foreign and Saudi public and private tour operators. Currently, Pakistani private companies have made tremendous efforts for the Pilgrims in the Hajj of 2014.

Hajj Infrastructure in KSA:

The Saudi government has expanded billions of dollars on Hajj infrastructures. It has included major expansions of the two Holy Mosques in Makkah and Al-Madinah. The Haram Mosque is now comfortably accommodative for a million worshipers during the Hajj. There are also two new levels to increase capacity for performing componential item of Hajj . The Masjid-Nabvi has also been extended irrespective to the crowds are smaller

during the Hajj. The space for throwing stones at the Satin the three Jamras has also been expanded into three tiers in Mina.[7]

To accommodate hujjaj, the government of KSA has built hundreds of miles for all weather, four lane highways, particularly between Arafat (عرفات) and Mina (منی) with fully automatic computerized traffic control system. To provide housing facilities portable tent cities are set up at Arafat (عرفات) and Mina (منی), meal, water, health and sanitation, transportation, telecommunications, public safety, banking facilities, markets and all basic amenities for more than two million people as it has been witnessed this year 2014 where more than 2.5 million have availed this opportunity. Each and every Saudi government agency and ministry has participated in making the Hajj an administrative success.[8]

The Political impact and Significance of the Hajj:

The Hajj impacts a lot on the political values of Pakistan as we see every Muslim of the county either politician or not see KSA as a very very sacred way and takes political vision from KSA. The government of KSA has upholded a firm policy banning political activity under the pretext of attending the Hajj, welcoming Muslims regardless of their political influence, the ministry of Hajj Pakistan acts the same as per instructions of political authorities of KSA. However, over the years a lot of political insights of KSA have groomed Pakistani Hajj organizations and Pakistani tour operators so the Hajj has remained a peaceful and joyous occasion as it has been noticed during Hajj periods of 2014. [9]

The Economic Impact of the Hajj on Numbers of Hujjaj (Pilgrims): [10]

Visiting two Holy Places in KSA (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), it generates a lot of gross income by the Hajj that is estimated to in the billions of dollars, which include annual government expenditures of KSA. As for as Pakistan is concerned, no of Hujjaj are decreased due to inflation and economic recession in the world. Because economic policies of the country varies time to time and same effect on the economy of Pakistan. It impacts not only by the Hajj but also by Umrah round the year, fasting month of Holy Ramadhan the busy season of religious activities and Lailat al-qadir, hundreds of Pakistani people go to KSA to perform tarawih prayers in the Haram Mosque.

The Social Impact of the Hajj:

Hajj is the greatest ritual celebration in Islam. As one of the Five Pillars of Islam, it is an obligation for one-fifth of world’s population. During the month of Dhu al-Hijjah, virtually the entire population of the Muslim world as well as Saudi Arabia is intimately touched by the Hajj, whether directly in its administration, its service industry, as a purveyor of personal goods and services as revealed in Pakistan. The Al-Adha, examined at the end of the Hajj, is commemorated throughout the Muslim world as a time of worship with family

and friends. The sites of Hajj locations are the physical and geographical manifestation of the birth of Islam. This blending highly sacred and the familiar commonplace has permeated Saudi society to such an extraordinary degree that it can be felt in virtually every heart of the Muslim.[11]

The Social Impact of the Hajj in the Eye of Holy Quran:

Dispersion of Powers:

وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بالحَجِّ يأْتُوكَ رِجَالاً وَعَلى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ .لِيَشْهَدُوا مَنافِعَ لَهُمْ ويَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللهِ فِي أيّامٍ مَعْلومات [12].

Unity of thoughts and acts this assembly so much power that it can remove everything logically and bring about a life full of happiness, dignity, and supremacy by performing heavenly injunctions and consolidating the pillars of social justice. The most important factor of understanding is the equitable teachings of Islam that bridges the gaps, brings hearts together, creates a link between east and west, and makes the black and white, Arabs and non- Arabs that feel sympathy for one another. As in the Farewell Hajj the Holy Prophet of Islam (saw) said:

أيُّها النّاسُ، إنَّ رَبَّكُم واحِدٌ وإنَّ أباكُم واحِدٌ، كُلُّكُم لآدَمَ وآدَمُ مِن تُرابٍ) إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللهِ أَتْقاكُمْ (ولَيْسَ لِعَرَبِيّ عَلى أَعْجَمِيٍّ فَضْلٌ إلا بالتّقوى[13].

The Hajj is the symbol of Unity of Power:

The Holy Qur'an advised Prophet Ibrahim (as) to call people to Hajj, to come and see the Islamic unity in the House to worship of God ALLAH, and to notice the assembly of dispersed powers in a single forum so as to realize the amazing advantages of Hajj, including self-purification, regulation of a sound politico-economic affairs, and consolidation of the pillars of supremacy across the world as a result of the assembly, unity, and circumambulation of the Sacred House.

Hajj a Lesson of Spirituality and Guidance :

Spiritual journey and affinity with God are some of the advantages of Hajj. The light of Allah's guidance illuminates susceptible hearts, making them detached from the earth and attached to God. By putting on Ihram and saying *Labbayk Allah Humma Labbayk*, circumambulating the House, offering sacrifice, and doing other acts of worship, man's heart goes through a spiritual state. As the Holy Qur'an supports this claim by saying:

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبارَكاً وهدىً للعالمين[14]

Proclivity of the People's towards the Kaaba:

By thinking about what the Holy Qur'an and 'Ali (R.A) have said, we will realize the fact that inclination/ proclivity towards the Kaaba (for those who are sound instinctively) is not ordinary inclination, rather there is a divine attraction in it. There is the same attraction towards the household of the Holy Prophet (saw) being the result of Prophet Ibrahim's supplication and God's answering him:

فَاجْعَلْ أَفْئِدَةً مِنَ النّاسِ تَهوي إِلَيْهِم [15]

When, carrying out God's order, Prophet Ibrahim (as) brought his wife HaJar and the infant Ismaeel (Prophet Ishmael) to al-Hijaz desert and had to leave them alone there, raising his hands towards the sky, supplicated as revealed in Holy Quran:

رَبّنا إِني أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرّيّتِي بِوادٍ غَيْرِ ذي زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ المحَرَّمِ رَبّنا لِيُقيموا الصّلاةَ فَاجْعَلْ أَفْئِدَةً مِنَ النّاسِ تَهوي إِلَيْهِمْ وَارْزُقْهُمْ مِنَ الثّمراتِ لَعَلّهُمْ يَشْكُرونَ[16].

Hajj, a Gigantic Advantage for the Muslims:

Man's attraction to the House of God and forum of His Oneness, on the one hand, and the great assembly of the ummah in a single place for performing a series of common religious acts, extremely inspiring in creating understanding and unity of thoughts, on the other, is a great heavenly asset bestowed on Muslims by God. Moral virtues, the power to a spiritual way of living both in the world and the Hereafter, are some of the advantages of Hajj.

The Kaaba, a security for the survival of human society:

The Kaaba, which has been described as the sacred house and

Maintenance for the people, and the month during which Muslims assemble in Mecca as the sacred month, and also the sacrificial animals with garlands indicate respect for the house. As revealed in the Holy Quran:

جَعَلَ اللهُ الكَعْبَةَ البيْتَ الحَرامَ قِياماً لِلنّاسِ وَالشَّهْرَ الحَرامَ والهَدْيَ والقَلائِدَ، ذلِكَ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا في السَّمَاوَاتِ والأَرْضِ وَأَنَّ اللهَ بكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَليمٌ [17]

Hajj -The true benefactor is God and offering thanks is obligatory:

God Who is the true Benefactor is the One Who has favored human being infinitely. In this relation, the Holy Qur'an says:

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللهِ لا تحُصُوهَا[18]

Showing God's favor to man, the Holy Qur'an also says:

أَلَم تَرَوا أَنَّ اللهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي السَّماوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الأَرْضِ وَأَسْبَغَ عَلَيكُمْ نِعَمَهُ ظَاهِرَةً وبَاطِنَةً[19].

Hajj makes a man Generous in Every Little Deed:

For all benefactions, God only expects His servants to visit His House and to offer a sacrifice, that too, to the extent of each one's financial capability.

Hajj - Thankfulness Benefits Man, Not God

Visitation of the Sacred House does not benefit God, for He is above what we think of Him. Rather it is a grace from the Almighty God. By Hajj, God has made man distinct from animals. As the Holy Qur'an says:

أُولَئِكَ كَالأنعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ؛ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الغَافِلُونَ[20]

Hajj - Worship is Man's Dignity:

It is from God to man to make a man duty-bound to pray, to make pilgrimage to Mecca, and to do other religious acts that are somehow expressions of thanks by which man's dignity is safeguarded

Hajj Removes Poverty and Social Disobedience:

The words 'poverty' and 'sins' indicate that Hajj brings about absolute independence and purification for Ummah in a way that they feel no need for alien nations' help and feel independent in cultural, economic, military, and administrative affairs.

Hajj warned about our futures:

As Abdullah ibn Abbas is said as saying: I was with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w) in the Farewell Hajj. He moved forward to the Kaaba with addressing to people said:

يحِجُّ أغنياءُ أُمّتي لِلنَّزهَةِ ويحِجُّ أَوسَاطُها لِلتّجارَةِ ويحِجُّ فُقَراؤُهُم لِلرّياءِ والسُّمعَةِ، فعِندَها يكُونُ أَقوامٌ
يَتَعلّمُونَ القُرآنَ لِغيرِ اللهِ ويَتّخِذُونهُ مَزامِيرَ، ويكونُ أَقوامٌ يَتفقَّهونَ لِغيرِ اللهِ.

"The rich will go to Mecca for amusement, the middle-class for business, and the poor for showing off and fame. At that time, people will learn the Holy Qur'an for purposes other than Allah, recite it as song, and engage in learning (Islamic) jurisprudence for worldly benefits."

Conclusion :

The Hajj affects collective and individual beliefs and practices that spread of universal Islamic values affects. After all, Pakistan is not enjoying best effects and impact of Hajj as peace and tolerance but also contributing a lot in Hajj management and improved mechanism of Hajj through the help of Govt and Public aid by its Hajj ministry. Finally, Pakistani Hajjis come from a country that is overwhelmingly Muslim and with Muslims all over the world KSA and practice true Islam here in Pakistan. Hajj has an enormous impact on our life from all respects particularly if social and religious sentiments come with us side by side. So the spread of "True Islam" is absolute reality of Hajj and its impact of Ummah.

Note and References :

1 *G. Caledonian, "Hajj as Mass Gathering: History and Implictions,", Islamic Education Center, Huston, 2010*

2 *M. Sajid, "pilgrimage thereto is a duty men owe to Allah," KSA , pp. 1–7, 2010*

3 *A. Islam and I. R. Observance, "Hajj in Islam,"Vol 22 no1.May 2014.IRTI, KSA.*

4 *P.J. A. complied by: Late Muhammad Moinuddin Ahmad, "HANDBOOK OF HAJJ."Gov't of Pakistan Ministry of religious Affairs, 1993.*

5 *D. Clingingsmith and M. Kremer, "The Impact of the Hajj: Was Malcolm X Right? *," 2007*

6 *Guiso, Luigi, Sapienza, Paola, and Luigi Zingales, People's Opium? Religion and Economic Attitudes. Journal of Monetary Economics, 50(1) p. 225-282.*

7 *Scupin, Raymond. The Social Significance of the Hajj for Thai Muslims, Muslim World 72(1) p. 25-33.*

8 *Boisjoly, J., G. Duncan, M. Kremer, D. Levy, and J. Eccles. 2006. Empathy or Antipathy? The Consequences of Racially and Socially Diverse Peers on Attitudes and Behaviors. American Economic Review 96(5) p.1890-1906.*

9 *Low, Michael, Empire of the Hajj: Pilgrims, Plagues, and Pan-Islam under British Surveillance.Unpublished M.A. thesis.*

10 *Low, Michael, Empire of the Hajj: Pilgrims, Plagues, and Pan-Islam under British Surveillance.Unpublished M.A. thesis.*

11 *C. by A.-I. Organization, "Social Effects of Hajj Hajj."*

12 . *Al-Hajj, Ayah 27, 28*

Bukhari, Kitab ul Manaqib, Hadith No. 607, Dar ul Sadir, Berut, Lebanon

14 *Al-e-Imran Ayah 96.*

15 *Ibrahim, Ayah 37*

---

[16] *Ibrahim, Ayah 37.*

[17] *Al-Maidah, Ayah 97*

[18] *Ibrahim, Ayah 34.*

[19] *Ar-Raad, Ayah 20.*

[20] *Al-Aaraaf, Ayah 179.*